

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

news release

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INTERIOR ANNOUNCES COMPLETE BAN ON IMPORT OF JUNGLE FOWL

The Interior Department is now banning completely the importation of grey jungle fowl into the United States, it was announced today. Fishermen use the fowl's neck feathers in fly tying for salmon and trout.

India, whose conservationists believe the survival of this species is endangered, forbade its export in 1967. Since then, jungle fowl have entered the United States from Pakistan, Nepal, and other countries. Officials of Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife reported they had obtained evidence, however, that the fowl exists naturally only in India and probably was smuggled into exporting countries.

The Lacey Act of 1900, as amended, prohibits importation into the United States of birds taken contrary to law of the country of origin. In addition, the Tariff Act of 1930 grants authority to the Secretary of the Interior to reduce or eliminate feather import quotas upon finding that the wild supply is threatened with serious reduction or extinction.

India's famed ornithologist Salim Ali reports that the grey jungle fowl "does not readily breed in captivity and our investigations have confirmed that nowhere in the adjacent countries are there game farms from which the plumes could possibly be derived."

Ali's findings are seconded by Jean Delacour, president emeritus of the International Council for Bird Preservation.

Regulations under the Tariff Act allow an annual import quota of 5,000 jungle fowl skins. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife records indicate that 3,397 skins entered the United States in the past five years.

The only exception to future imports will be of skins previously taken out of India legally and held in bonded storage in another country.

Wildlife importations are checked at ports of entry by Customs officers assisted by Federal game management agents.

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